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Reagan announces reprisals against Poland, warns USSR

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WASHINGTON — Charging "betrayal" of the Polish people both by their government and by the Soviet Union, President Ronald Reagan last night imposed new economic sanctions against Warsaw and warned Moscow it faces "concrete political and economic" retaliation unless the repression is ended soon.

Appearing on what was originally to have been a televised Christmas message to the nation, Regan devoted much of his 20-minute address to the crisis in Poland.

The President disclosed that he had sent stern letters to Polish Gen. Wojciech Jaruzelski and Soviet President Leonid Brezhnev warning them to "consider the consequences of their actions."

"I want emphatically to state tonight that if the outrages in Poland do not cease, we cannot and will not conduct business as usual with the perpetrators and those who aid and abet them," the President declared. "Make no mistake: Their crime will cost them dearly in their future dealings with America and free people everywhere."

But senior Administration officials said that Reagan decided to defer sanctions against the Soviet Union at this junction in order to give the Kremlin time to assess how determined he is, to enable Pope John Paul II to make an initiative of his own, and to provide the United States a little more time to

try to persuade its allies of the need for unified actions against Poland and the Soviet Union if steps toward conciliation are not taken relatively quickly inside Poland.

"The President is quite consciously putting his credibility on the line," one official declared. "He is fully aware of the road he may have to travel if his warnings are not heeded. If the situation is not reversed, we are moving toward a whole new chapter in US-Soviet and possibly US-allied relations."

Reagan revealed a piece of hitherto top secret intelligence in trying to establish Soviet involvement in the martial law crackdown ordered by Jaruzelski on Dec. 12.

"It is no coincidence that the martial law proclamations imposed in December by the Polish government were being printed in the Soviet Union in September," he said. Printing of those documents, sources said, were presumably done in Russia because of fears that the information might leak if the printing job were done in Poland.

Reagan said that already-suspended US government-sponsored shipments of agricultural and dairy products will remain in force until "absolute assurances" are received from independent agencies that all food will go to the Polish people, "not their oppressors." Private humanitarian shipments will not be suspended, he said, but "only so long as we know that the Polish people themselves receive the food."

Sources said the United States would like the International Red Cross or some other neutral agency to be permitted to send observers to Poland to assure such deliveries are not diverted.